# FIRST AID IN AN EMERGENCY

IN BRIEF

ICRC

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© ICRC, August 2025

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4271/002 08.2025

# FIRST AID
# IN AN EMERGENCY

## FIRST AID

This booklet contains information and guidelines for providing first aid in an emergency. It cannot cover every situation, so the guidance is of a general nature. The suggested behaviours and measures must be applied taking account of:

- local requirements
- available resources
- effective local practices, if any
- access to and the capacity for further care.

The ICRC therefore declines all responsibility in the event that the recommendations do not correspond to the best course of action in a given situation.

First aid is the first essential help given in an emergency in order to preserve life, prevent further injury or illness and relieve suffering in order to contribute to recovery. These objectives should be achieved:

- without harm, either physical or psychological, to yourself, to the casualty or to others
- within your limits, be they emotional, physical, technical or material.

Name: _____ Tel.: _____

Person to be contacted in case of emergency:

Name: _____ Tel.: _____

Your ability to manage an emergency and to care for a wounded or sick person safely and effectively (beyond just treating the injury or condition) can be enhanced by seeking the assistance of others present at the scene and by using resources available on the spot.

Sometimes, further care may be required. In those cases, the casualty will need to be transported in a safe and timely manner to an appropriate care provider.

**You can save lives**
**(or help to do so)**
**by acting immediately,**
**safely and humanely.**

We urge you to take a first-aid course. Contact the ICRC delegation or the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in your country to find out if they offer such courses. First-aid courses and guidelines will help boost your confidence and refresh or enhance your skills so that you will be better able to act safely, humanely and effectively in an emergency.

## IN ALL SITUATIONS

Think safety,
Act safely.

Reassure – Explain –
Comfort the casualty.

Seek help.

If the casualty is conscious, ask if they agree for you to treat them. Examine them thoroughly. Provide first aid as required.

Monitor the casualty. Ensure they are comfortable and their dignity is respected.

Offer clean liquids to drink (but only if the casualty is fully responsive).

Evacuate the casualty
if they need further care.

## THINK SAFETY, ACT SAFELY

Avoid becoming a casualty yourself (stay clear of the minefield, fire, toxic substance, etc.).

Avoid direct contact with body fluids (blood, saliva, vomit).

Remove the casualty safely and quickly from the danger zone.

**Think safety, Act safely**

Care for the casualty in a safe place.

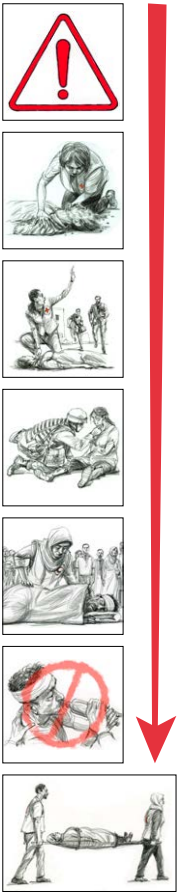
Keep your hands clean.

Relax and manage your stress. Reassure your family and friends.

## WHEN THE PERSON IS UNRESPONSIVE

Briefly explain to bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

Check if the casualty is breathing by gently tilting the head backwards and looking, listening and feeling for breaths.



Place the casualty in a stable position on their side with the head tilted gently backwards to allow them to breathe easily and to enable fluids, such as blood, saliva or vomit, to drain out of their mouth.

If you suspect that the casualty has suffered a traumatic injury, try to limit the movement of their head and neck and keep their spine as straight as possible.

Cover the casualty.

## If the person has a seizure or epileptic episode

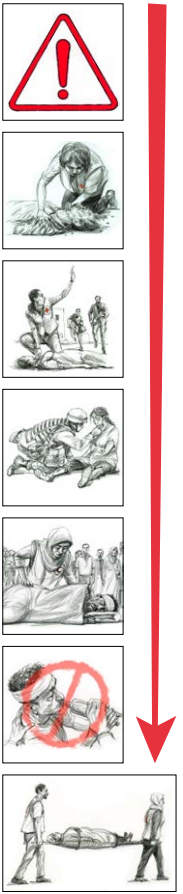
Briefly explain to bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

Manage the scene so that neither you nor the person having a seizure are injured during the episode.

Let the seizure run its course. If possible, use a blanket, item of clothing or soft material to protect the person's head from injury. Do not restrain them; this may cause injury to you or them. Do not put anything in their mouth.

Once the seizure is over, place the person in a stable position on their side with the head tilted gently backwards to allow them to breathe easily and to enable fluids, such as blood, saliva or vomit, to drain out of their mouth.

Cover the casualty.



## WHEN THE PERSON IS BLEEDING HEAVILY

Briefly explain to the casualty, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

### If the casualty is in an unsafe location (collapsed building, minefield, under gunfire)

Get the casualty to apply pressure to the wound or apply pressure yourself using a clean cloth.

If the bleeding is from a limb, help the casualty to apply a tourniquet high above the injury site.

Move the casualty to a safe location.

When in a safe location follow the steps below.

Cover the casualty.

### If the casualty is in a safe location

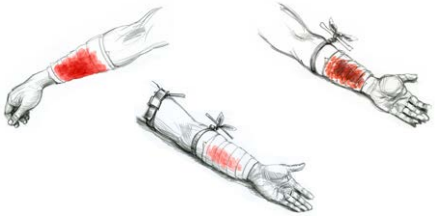
Get the casualty to apply pressure to the wound or apply pressure yourself using a clean cloth.

If the wound is deep, pack it with the cleanest material possible, applying pressure directly on the bleeding site.

Replace manual pressure with a tight, compressive bandage.

If blood soaks through the compressive bandage, do not remove the first dressing, as that will dislodge any clots that have formed. Instead, add a second dressing and compressive bandage and apply firm pressure.

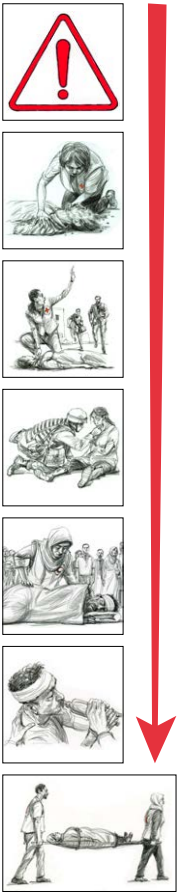
If the casualty is still bleeding heavily from a limb, apply a tourniquet 6 cm above the injury.



If the tourniquet does not stop the bleeding, apply another tourniquet above the first one until the bleeding stops.

Cover the casualty and keep them warm.

For more information about the use of tourniquet see *ICRC's Pre-Hospital Emergency Care: Guidance for Applying Tourniquets*.



## If the limb is amputated

Follow the normal steps to control the bleeding.

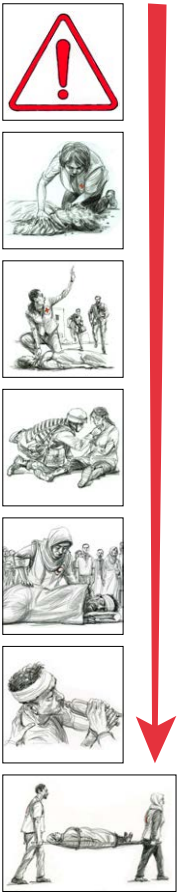
Gently cover the amputated limb with sterile gauze or a dressing moistened with saline.

If safe to do so, designate someone to search the scene for the amputated body part(s).

Seal the amputated part(s) inside a plastic bag.

If possible, store the bag containing body parts in a cool container.

Do not place the amputated part(s) directly on ice or a cold pack.

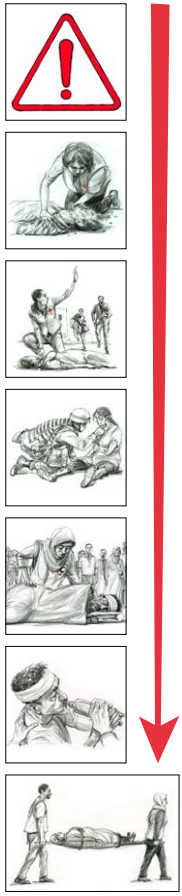


## If something is embedded in the limb

Do not remove the foreign object.

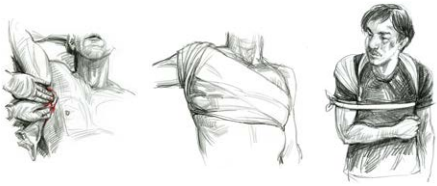
Immobilize the object by putting compresses or a clean cloth around it.

Apply a compressive bandage without removing the object.



## If bleeding is from the neck, armpit or groin

Use the same steps to control bleeding. It is very difficult to apply a tourniquet in these areas, so correct wound packing and use of compressive dressing is important.

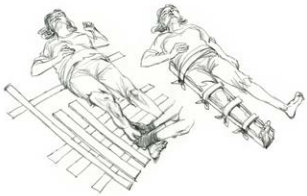


## WHEN THE PERSON HAS A FRACTURE

Briefly explain to the casualty, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

For a limb fracture, gently position the fractured part of the limb in a straight line enabling easy and effective immobilization.

Immobilize the limb to reduce pain and limit further adverse effects.



Check for signs of swelling or a bluish colour of the limb and ensure that the splint is not causing pain. If you spot any of these signs, loosen the splint.

## If it is a suspected neck fracture

Gently immobilize the head and place the body in a horizontal, straight position to reduce pain and limit further adverse effects.

## If it is an open fracture

Briefly explain to the casualty, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

Gently position the fractured part of the limb in a straight line enabling easy and effective immobilization.

Apply a bandage to the wound.

Immobilize the limb to reduce pain and limit further adverse effects.

## WHEN THE PERSON HAS A WOUND

Briefly explain to the casualty, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

Clean the wound (using clean liquids with or without soap).

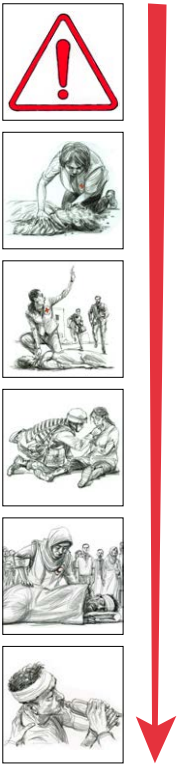
Cover the wound with a clean cloth. Monitor the wound.

### If the wound is large, dirty and infected

Clean the wound (using clean liquids with or without soap).

Cover the wound with a clean cloth.

Evacuate the casualty.



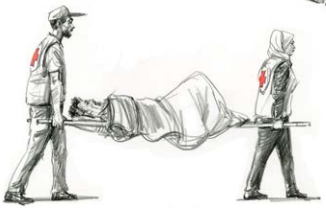
## If it is an abdominal wound

Briefly explain to the casualty, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

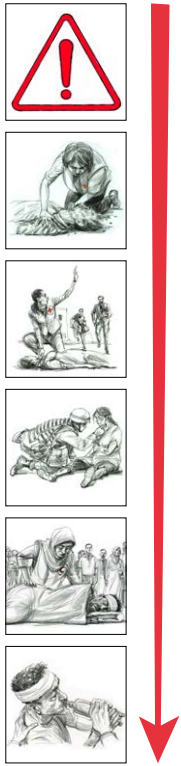
Cover the wound with a clean, wet cloth.

Do **not** push the organs back inside the abdomen.

Help the casualty to lie in a comfortable position (e.g. legs bent).



Evacuate the casualty.

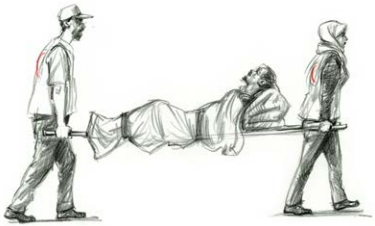


## If it is a sucking chest wound

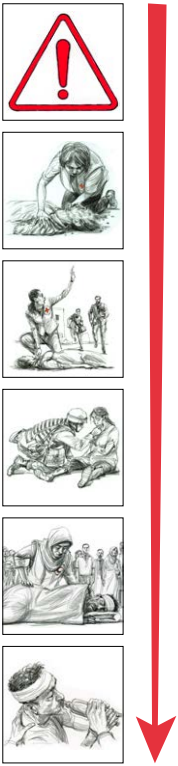
Briefly explain to the casualty, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

Cover the wound with a piece of plastic (or similar material) and attach it to the body along three sides only, to avoid completely sealing the dressing. Otherwise leave the wound exposed.

Help the casualty to lie in a comfortable position (e.g. half-seated).



Evacuate the casualty.



## WHEN THE PERSON HAS DIARRHOEA

Briefly explain to the person, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

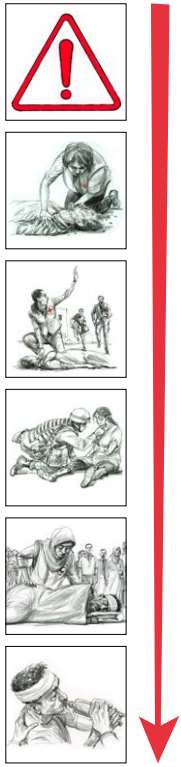
Wash your hands.

Filter and boil water so it is safe to drink.

When the water has cooled, mix it with sugar and salt, or use sachets of oral rehydration salts (ORS) if available.

Persuade the person with diarrhoea to drink the mixture.

Evacuate them if they need further care.



## WHEN THE PERSON HAS A BURN

Briefly explain to the casualty, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

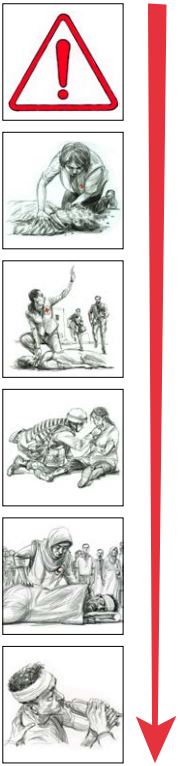
Cool the burn (e.g. under clean running water) for as long as possible. Stop when the casualty is no longer in pain or they start to feel cold.

Cover the burn with a clean, loose material such as cling film (plastic wrap) or a plastic bag.

Advise the casualty to monitor how well the burn heals and, if the pain persists or an infection develops, to seek further care.

If the burn is bigger than the palm of the casualty's hand or affects a sensitive area of the body (e.g. face, genitals, joints), seek further care.

If the casualty is a child, always seek further care.



## WHEN THE PERSON HAS SUNSTROKE

Briefly explain to the person, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

Move the person with sunstroke to a shaded place.

Help them cool down (e.g. by fanning them and/ or applying a cold, wet cloth on their face, around their neck, under their armpits and on their inner thighs).

Get the person to drink clean liquids.

Evacuate them if they need further care.

## WHEN THE PERSON IS VERY COLD OR HAS A FEVER

### If the person is suffering from extreme cold (hypothermia)

Briefly explain to the person, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

Help the person with hypothermia to warm up by covering and protecting them from the elements.

Offer clean, warm liquids. Do **not** warm the person by rubbing their body.

If the person's clothes are wet, promptly replace them with dry clothing.

Monitor the person. Evacuate them if they need further care.

### If the person has a fever

Briefly explain to the person, bystanders, friends and relatives what you are going to do and why, and the limits you may face. Seek any help you need.

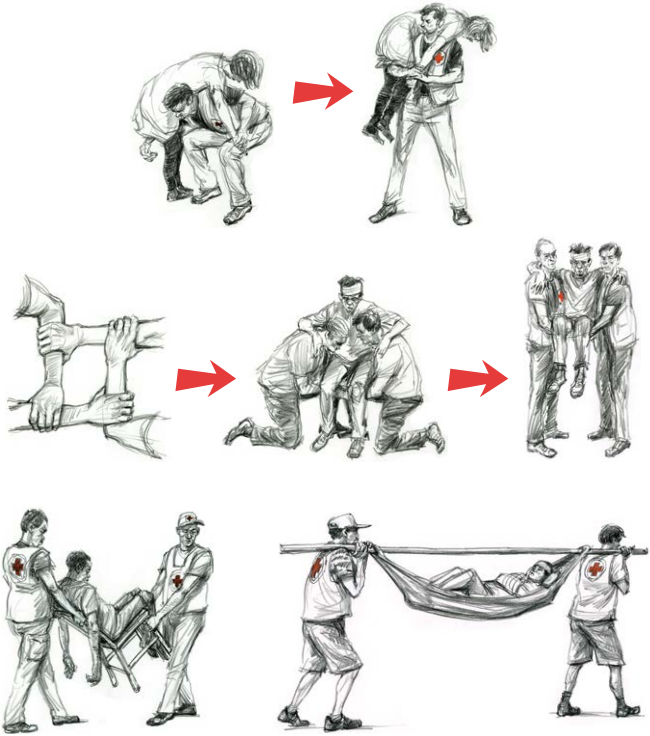
Place the person with a fever in a ventilated place. Help them cool down (e.g. by fanning them or by wiping their face with a wet cloth).

Monitor the person.

Get them to drink clean liquids.

Evacuate them if they need further care.

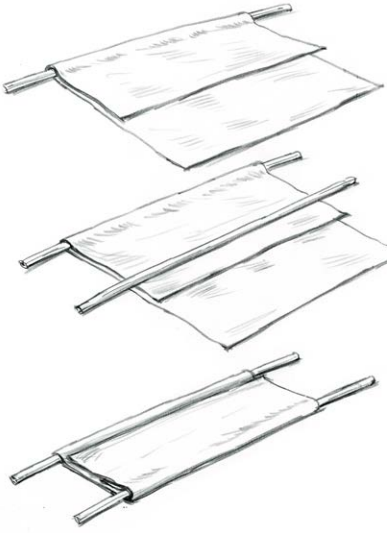
## WHEN THE PERSON NEEDS TO BE EVACUATED



Protect your back when lifting: bend your knees and keep your back straight.

Make sure the casualty is reassured and monitored during transport.

Hand the casualty over to the further care provider.



RICE
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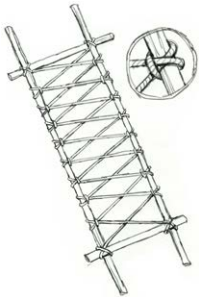

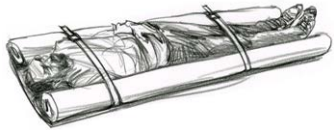

## RESPECT FOR THE WOUNDED, THE SICK AND HEALTH-CARE SERVICES

It is important to:

- respect and protect the wounded and sick, and to actively support and facilitate their access to health care without discrimination
- respect and protect health-care personnel, facilities and vehicles, whether civilian or military, regardless of which side they belong to
- respect the humanitarian and impartial character of health care
- refrain from forcing health-care personnel to obey unlawful orders or violate medical ethics
- ensure that health-care personnel, facilities and vehicles remain exclusively engaged in medical tasks
- refrain from denying or disrupting health care as a military tactic
- respect the distinctive emblems of the red cross, red crescent and red crystal, and refrain from using them improperly.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT AFTER A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Critical incidents are events that happen suddenly and put people's lives or safety at risk.

Many people who experience or witness a critical incident have psychological reactions immediately afterwards. These can be different for different people. They can include:

- fear
- nervousness
- restlessness
- crying
- not knowing where they are or what happened
- feeling confused, detached or in a daze
- not feeling anything
- not speaking or responding to others.

**Immediately after the incident**

Psychological first aid is humane, supportive and practical assistance. It can be used from the time of the incident up to a few days or weeks later. The basic principles are:
**Look** to find people who need urgent help.
**Listen** to the person and help them calm down.
**Link** them with their loved ones or help them find resources.

Focus on what the person needs, not on the incident itself. People should never be pressured to tell the story of what happened, as this could cause further psychological harm.

Listening is very important. Ask open questions (so the person can explain in their own words). Do not interrupt, judge or give your personal opinions. Do not say things like: “You shouldn’t feel that way”, “Pull yourself together”, “You should feel lucky you survived” or “You will get over it.”

Avoid inappropriate reassurance or false promises like: “Everything will be fine” or “The doctors will save your friend.”

Keep anything the person tells you private. Do not discuss it with others, except with the person’s care providers.

Psychological first aid can help immediately after a critical incident and may prevent mental health conditions from developing later. If the person does develop a mental health condition, first aid is no longer appropriate. The person should receive professional help.

If you encounter someone who has just been involved in a critical incident and the person has trouble focusing or understanding what is going on, before giving psychological first aid, first try to:

- make sure you are both away from danger
- find a quiet spot and sit together
- make eye contact
- stay calm, speak calmly and use calm body language (tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures and movements)
- speak softly and slowly using simple words and short sentences
- tell the person that they are safe (only if you are in a safe place)
- tell them that you will try to help
- repeat what you say several times
- ask the person to sit as comfortably as possible, feel the ground beneath their feet and tap their legs with their hands

- help the person to focus on non-distressing sights and sounds around them
- tell the person to focus on their breathing: start breathing deeply and slowly through your nose and ask them to do the same, making each breath slower and deeper for a few minutes.

Remember that safety is the priority. If the person is having severe psychological reactions, do not leave them alone. If they have a weapon, make sure they cannot use it.

**In the weeks after the incident**

Many people may continue experiencing anxiety, fear, restlessness, being easily startled, difficulty sleeping, sadness, anger, feelings of guilt, nightmares, heart palpitations, avoiding people, feeling tired, difficulty concentrating, recurring thoughts or images of what happened, body aches or headaches.

These reactions are normal. In most cases they will gradually stop. To help overcome them faster, people can:

- talk to someone they trust
- eat healthy foods
- exercise
- get enough rest and sleep
- pray, meditate or practise their spirituality
- do enjoyable activities like listening to music, reading or drawing
- help others
- do relaxation exercises.

Some reactions are unhelpful and could make the person feel worse, such as:

- avoiding people
- using alcohol and other drugs
- overworking
- avoiding all thoughts and conversations about the incident
- continuing as if nothing happened.

Professional help may be needed if things do not improve after a few weeks (for example, if the person has thoughts of suicide or self-harm, cannot carry out their usual activities, or engages in behaviours that put them or others at risk).

Ask your health services how and where you can get professional psychological support in case you or someone else needs it in the future.

## RESPECT FOR THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

During both peacetime and emergencies, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the ICRC offer first-aid training and, where needed, provide first aid directly, making no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions.

Red Cross and Red Crescent first-aiders endeavour to save lives and relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs and giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress. First-aiders do not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature. They provide first aid or training on a voluntary basis, in no way motivated by a desire for gain.

Red Cross and Red Crescent first-aiders wear a distinctive emblem for their identification and protection. They must be respected and supported in their humanitarian activities, be it in peacetime or during an emergency.

## NOTES

## NOTES

# GUIDE FOR POLICE CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

## INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW AND HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES FOR PROFESSIONAL POLICING

IN BRIEF

ICRC

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© ICRC, August 2025

Illustrations by Victor Juhasz

# GUIDE FOR POLICE CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

## INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW AND HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES FOR PROFESSIONAL POLICING

## POLICE CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

**To serve and to protect the people in your community**

## POLICE CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

**Key points**

- Always fulfil the duty imposed on you by law, by serving the community and protecting all persons against illegal acts.
- Respect and protect human dignity, and maintain and uphold everyone's human rights.
- Use force only when strictly necessary and to the extent required.
- Preserve the confidentiality that is imposed on you, unless the performance of duty or the needs of justice strictly require that you do otherwise.
- Never torture or inflict cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.
- Ensure full protection of the health of all persons in your custody.
- Do not commit any acts of corruption.
- Respect the law and this code of conduct, and prevent and oppose any violations of them.

Based on the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials

# FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF PERSONS

## RIGHTS THAT CAN NEVER BE TAKEN AWAY

### Right to life

No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his or her life.

### Prohibition against torture

Torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is never permitted under any circumstances.

# FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF PERSONS

## RIGHTS THAT CAN NEVER BE TAKEN AWAY

### Prohibition against retroactive criminal laws

No one shall be held guilty of a criminal offence
if it was not one, under domestic or international law,
when it was committed.

# POLICE RESPONSIBILITIES

## DOMESTIC LAW ENFORCEMENT

You have a duty to:

- protect life and property
- provide an environment of security
- maintain and restore public order and security
- respect human rights without discrimination.

## DETECTION AND PREVENTION OF CRIME

You are part of the community.

You should promote trust, respect and cooperation between the police and the community.

Protect the human rights of those who have become, or may become, the victims of a crime.

## POLICE RESPONSIBILITIES

### MAINTENANCE AND RESTORATION OF PUBLIC ORDER AND SECURITY

People have the right to hold opinions, to express themselves, and to associate and assemble peacefully.

You have a duty to maintain and restore public order and security within the law.

### ASSISTANCE TO THE COMMUNITY IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY

You should provide aid and assistance in times of need.

# POLICE POWERS

## NO ONE SHALL BE SUBJECTED TO ARBITRARY ARREST OR DETENTION

### Arrest

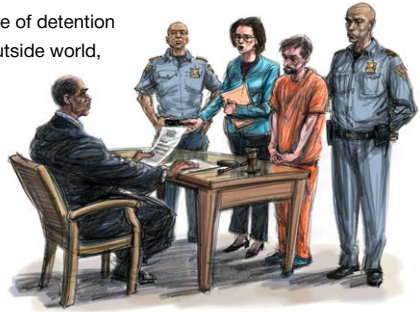
You must:

- treat persons who have been arrested with dignity and humanity
- inform them of the charges against them
- inform them of their rights while making the arrest
- an arrested person must be treated in full compliance with the presumption of innocence, until proved guilty according to law
- prevent disappearances and extra-judicial killings.

### Detention

Persons deprived of their liberty have the right to:

- be brought promptly before a court if accused of a crime
- see a lawyer
- see a doctor
- be held in an official place of detention
- communicate with the outside world, especially their families
- challenge, without delay, the lawfulness of their detention
- a fair trial within a reasonable period of time or be released.



# POLICE POWERS

## Search and seizure

Persons being searched should be treated with dignity and their property respected.

Searches should be conducted legally.

## Use of force and firearms

Any force used should be proportionate to the seriousness of the offence and your legitimate objective. The intentional lethal use of firearms is an extreme measure and should be undertaken only:

- when strictly unavoidable
- when there is an imminent threat to life.

# VULNERABLE GROUPS

## WOMEN

Women may be vulnerable to particular risks, and attention must be paid to their specific protection needs in each case.

Body searches should only be conducted by female officers.

Women should be held in quarters that are separate from those for men; where this is not possible, they should be segregated from men.

Pregnant women and nursing mothers should be provided with special facilities in detention.

## JUVENILES

Juveniles require additional protection because of their age and vulnerability.

They should be detained separately from adults, unless doing otherwise is thought to be in their best interests.

# VULNERABLE GROUPS

## REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

You should recognize that they are particularly vulnerable owing to their status as refugees or displaced persons.

They are entitled to the same fundamental rights as everyone else and due regard must be shown for their lives, their dignity and their physical and mental well-being.

## VICTIMS OF CRIME

Treat victims of crime as you would wish yourself and members of your family to be treated.

In your dealings with them, you should keep in mind their situation as victims of crime and show due regard for their human rights.

# PROTECTION FOR PERSONS DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIBERTY

# PROTECTION FOR PERSONS DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIBERTY

The purpose of ICRC visits is to assess the material and psychological conditions of detention and the treatment of people deprived of their liberty.

Whether dealing with a situation covered by the Geneva Conventions or not, the ICRC applies the same criteria in its work on behalf of those deprived of their liberty. When conducting their visits, delegates must:

- be able to see all persons deprived of their liberty who fall within the ICRC's mandate
- have access to all places in which they are held
- be able to talk to them in private
- receive from the authorities a list of persons deprived of their liberty who fall within the ICRC's mandate, or they must be able to draw up such lists themselves
- be allowed to repeat the visits as often as they wish.

## THE ICRC WORKS TO:

- prevent or put an end to disappearances and summary executions, torture and other forms of ill-treatment
- improve conditions of detention
- ensure respect for procedural safeguards and judicial guarantees of persons deprived of their liberty
- restore family links whenever they have been disrupted
- facilitate the rehabilitation of released detainees.

## COMMAND AND MANAGEMENT

You should:

- uphold and comply with the law
- report any instances of unethical or unlawful conduct by your colleagues to your superiors
- be responsible and accountable both to yourself and your community.

## ULTIMATELY, YOU WILL HAVE TO ACCOUNT FOR YOUR ACTIONS AND CONDUCT

## TAKE DETAILED NOTES

As a member of the police the security forces, you will add to your credibility and demonstrate your integrity if you document your actions fully. While doing so, you should answer the following key questions:

**WHO** witnessed or was responsible for the act?

**WHAT** happened exactly?

**WHEN** did the event take place (date, time, circumstances)?

**WHERE** did the event take place (describe in detail)?

**WHY** might the event have occurred (motive)?

**HOW** might it have happened?

Your duty as a law enforcement official is to gather all the facts material to an investigation. **It is NOT your duty** to determine the guilt or innocence of an individual. That remains the task of the courts. Your testimony in court is crucial, and an accurate presentation of the evidence will enhance not only your own reputation but also that of the police or security forces you represent.

# LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

## INSTRUMENTS FROM WHICH THESE RULES STEM

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners
- Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials
- Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power
- Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment
- Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners
- Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials
- Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women